

STIP Public Meeting, Round 2  
Kealakehe High School Library  
August 6, 2007  
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

- Laura Dierenfield:
  - Readiness is the key. Projects must be ready in the year it is receiving funds. The deferral of the construction for Alii Highway is a result of unresolved issues. However, this project is still the highest priority for Hawaii County. If Alii Highway becomes ready, HDOT will work with Hawaii County on getting it back on the STIP. It is very difficult for HDOT to program high-cost projects that are not ready. If it is deferred, other projects of equal magnitude must move up and the subsequent years must be adjusted. Waimea Trails and Greenways has been deferred in previous years because the status has never been solidified due to design issues. HDOT had discussions with Hawaii County recently, and issues are currently being resolved.
  - The overwhelming high-priority results for the bypass did not determine when the funds were programmed. We anticipate the EIS to be complete in FFY 08.
  - The Oneo Bay project could be advanced only if something of equal value is deferred. HDOT would defer to Hawaii County to decide where this project lies in their priorities. Remember, HDOT had to defer \$200 million out of the 6-year STIP to constrain it.
  - Laura would like talking points for the federal funds in jeopardy in 2010 and ways to discourage the legislature from raiding the state highway fund. The burden is on HDOT to educate the public and the State legislature. There has been a lack of understanding about the budget, the federal process, and ultimately, how projects get funded. HDOT is in the process of developing a work plan regarding the situation we are facing. This past year has been a bad year for the State—there were floods earlier in the year on Kauai and Oahu, the pedestrian overpass was damaged, and the earthquake damaged some facilities. HDOT will provide talking points after it has met with congressional delegates who will be assisting them in Washington. These meetings should take place over the next two months.
  - Laura mentioned HSB 497. HDOT currently spends approximately \$2-\$3 million per year on bikepaths. Some bikepath projects on Hawaii and Kauai. The biggest bikepath project is Leeward Bikepath that stretches from Waipahu to Waianae. The first phase is expected to cost about \$9 million with subsequent phases totaling \$25 million. In addition, all new roadways and widening projects have some form of bike route, such as North-South Road in Ewa and Kuhio Highway Widening in Kapaa.
- Marni H.:
  - The Scenic Byways program is important to HDOT. HDOT is trying to get the consultant to give a presentation at the December conference. The process is still ongoing in which HDOT is developing criteria, application forms, evaluation procedures, etc. HDOT has just started working last year after resolving issues with FHWA.

- The public can continue to give comments, such as support for projects on collector roads. Please send comments in writing. Comments can help form STIP Amendment #1.
- Freeing congestion is a priority for HDOT. However, roads still need to qualify as a collector road and must complete the environmental process, which normally includes NEPA and 343. The NEPA must be complete in order to be eligible for federal funds for design and construction.
- Lillian Beaufriere:
  - HDOT's bridge program has not changed since the Minnesota bridge failure. HDOT already has a significant investment in its bridge program. The bridge program has \$280 million in bridge rehabilitation and bridge replacements statewide. There is currently an average of \$40-\$45 million per year spent for bridge projects as opposed to \$15-\$20 million per year spent in the past. Last year, HDOT has decided to focus on preservation projects and do our best to not defer bridge projects. Only 8% of the bridges on the State system are classified as structurally deficient, compared to the national average of 14%. The bridge collapse in Minnesota highlighted the fact there is a need to support the bridge program. Hawaii has one steel truss bridge that is remotely similar to the bridge in Minnesota. However, Hawaii's bridge is a redundant system in which if one member fails, the other members will pick up the load. HDOT's Hawaii District crew has inspected the bridge and verified that it is still in good shape.
- Tim Bates:
  - Kawaihae Harbor and Saddle Road projects are funded with non-competitive earmarked monies. The Alii Drive culvert project competes with the regular formula funds.
  - A project has many impediments such as eminent domain, cultural hardships (bones), environmental blocks (native species and land), and social barriers (N.I.M.B.Y.s and locals). How is HDOT mitigating the protestors and activists? Most people don't have the time to attend a public hearing. If thirty people attend to protest a project, isn't it safe to assume everyone else supports it?
    - HDOT response: There needs to be increased activism on everyone's part. The most vulnerable stage is the EIS. The alternatives analysis must be unbiased on multiple solutions and the decisions made are based on the majority of comments. Regulations do not allow HDOT to assume that those who do not attend a meeting are in favor of the project. When the EIS is published, HDOT is required by law to respond to all comments and it becomes a part of the document. Comments can also be written, not just in meeting attendance.
  - When will HDOT consider grade separation and overpasses in East Hawaii? Is grade separation in the plans for metro areas of West Hawaii or even East Hawaii such as Hilo? Grade separation and overpasses are one of the best traffic mitigation measures available. Stop lights and roundabouts suffer from peak capacity loads. Both have the same flow-through.
    - Some intersections have been identified in the Long-Range Land Transportation Plan to provide for grade separation intersections. One such intersection is Kealakehe Parkway, but this is in the long-term.

HDOT needs to consider cost. Building a grade separated intersection is infeasible at this time. When dealing with a constrained reality, one has to compare widening that would cost \$50 million versus approximately \$40-60 million to build a grade separated interchange. You either widen a road or build an interchange. HDOT needs to look at what will bring the greatest value. An overpass has no value unless the highway is widened first.